

Philips to build health technology center in Tennessee

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Dutch giant Royal Philips announced plan Thursday to build a health technology center in Tennessee that officials expect will create more than 800 jobs in the Nashville area over the next two years.

"We take great pride in the health care strength here in Middle Tennessee, and this company will only add to that," Gov. Bill Haslam said. "I can't think of a better company than Philips to complement and support Nashville's regional health care community."

Haslam said he had hosted Philips executives at the governor's mansion and also visited officials in Amsterdam on a recent trade mission to Europe and praised the company's "depth and talent and commitment."

Philips plans to consolidate various operations in Tennessee, including customer service, finance, human resources and marketing.

Craig Gruchacz, the head of global business services in North America at Philips, praised state officials for fostering a "health care technology ecosystem" in Tennessee.

"We are eager to share our ideas and our best practices and also learning from other like-minded organizations," he said.

Gruchacz said the company is scouting sites in the Nashville area and hopes to decide on a location in the coming months.

Founded in 1891, the company started by making carbon filament lamps in a factory in the Netherlands. It became a world leader in the manufacture of light bulbs before branching out into the consumer and medical electronics markets, making everything from X-ray equipment to electric shavers and televisions.

Philips last year spun off its lighting division so it could focus on its future as a health technology provider.

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